

THE HISTORY OF POCAHONTAS COUNTY

CHAPTER 9 - EDUCATION

(Chapter Outline)

Taking up education when the home study of the pioneer children was replaced by the first community schools, the subject might be treated as follows:

1. Systematized Education in the County to 1865.

a. The Period to 1850. This would involve treatment of the first schoolhouses; the school attendance and curriculum; when and where these first schools were built; how they were supported; descriptions of some of them; descriptions of the educational equipment available - the textbooks used, for instance; the teaching methods used; the teachers themselves and their training for their positions; county leaders who came out of these schools.

b. From the Formation of the County 1865. In the light of the above suggestions, what changes or improvements were made in the school system after the county was formed. The questions in the section above would necessarily be pertinent here also.

2. From Reconstruction to the Turn of the Century.

a. The question in section 1-a above would here be answered in the light of any changes resulting from the formation of the new state of West Virginia.

b. When and where were the first urban schools; the material in section 1-a should be here assembled in regard to these schools.

c. Were there early colleges, private academies, or other institutions of higher learning; who were the faculties; what were the curricula; attendance; how were they supported; what notable teachers or graduates did they have; give a short history of each from their beginning.

d. After the emancipation of the Negro, what steps were taken to educate him. This should include the schools opened; where and when; their facilities, and the tangible results they showed in better citizenship and a higher social standard in the county.

In this entire division there should be as many figures as possible introduced to contrast the school enrollment and general expansion of education after the War between the States with early education in the county.

3. Education in the Twentieth Century.

a. Apply the same queries in section 1-a to both the rural and urban schools of the years prior to 1933, chronicling the gradual growth and expansion into new fields for education, recording also the changes which came with the growth.

b. With the county unit system opening in 1933, how did education in the county differ from the preceding years? Statistics on enrollment and

facilities in comparison with the foregoing periods should be introduced here. Here should be told the full story of today's education in the county, along the lines of the questions in section 1-a above, but taking into consideration these subdivisions:

- (1) Graded Schools. The standards and teachers and teaching systems; enrollment, attendance; physical equipment, facilities; the attack on illiteracy and its results.
- (2) High Schools. Treat as part (1) above.
- (3) Negro Schools. Treat as part (1) above.
- (4) The Consolidation System. Busses, and the facts concerning their use for transporting pupils.
- (5) Trade Schools and Special Schools for the Handicapped. Treated as part (1) above.
- (6) Institutions of higher learning, as in section 2-c above.

In this division again there should be introduced the necessary facts to establish the growth of education by comparison; also it should be remembered that all emphasis possible should be placed on the men who were prominent in developing education in the county, the leaders who headed the system, or the leaders who rose through its training.

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(Chapter Questions)

Describe attitude of first settlers toward education. Schooling. Was there any "book learning" in the home? Were any of the families able to hire private tutors for their children? Did any go away to college or other boarding school? Where? When? Were preachers instructors in writing, reading, etc., as well as religion? When was the first change made toward organized schools, and who paid for them? Where were they located? Who taught them? What subjects were taught? How long a term? How many students? Any anecdotes handed down?

1. Systematized Education in the County to 1865.

- a. When were first schools open to all public established? Did they gain many students? What were length of term, subjects taught, methods, books used? Were they public subscription schools? How were teachers paid? Where did they come from? How much schooling had they? Where were first schools located? Why were sites chosen? How was education promoted? Who were its proponents? Did the church take the lead in this work? Describe the school house, furnishings, etc. Were teachers elected to political offices? What influence did they wield? What was their social position? What county leaders developed from pupils in these schools? Did they attend college? What was the extent of their schooling? Give costs of education; books; schools; teachers' salaries.
- b. What changes were effected when the county was organized as such? What school system was inaugurated? How were taxes levied? How much? How many schools were there? Where located? When? How many pupils? What equipment was bought? What was the educational provision during the civil struggle 1860-65? How were the schools manned? When did women begin to teach? Was teaching limited to private schools, or homes, during the war?

2. From Reconstruction to the Turn of the Century.

- a. What changes resulted from formation of new state of West Virginia? What provisions were made for county schools in new government? How did they affect the county? Did the new state promote education, or neglect it in the early years of statehood? Answer any questions in section 1-a for this part too, if the information is different.
- b. When were the first urban schools founded? Where? Why? How many pupils? Teachers? How were teachers paid? How long was term? What subjects were taught? Answer questions in 1-a for this section as well.
- c. What early colleges or private academies were there? Who were the faculties? What were the curricula? Attendance? How supported? What notable teachers or graduates did they have? Give short history of each. Do institutions still function? What changes have been made? How added to in matter of courses of study, physical plant, equipment? Any changes in control during history?

- d. After emancipation of Negro what steps were taken to educate him? What schools were opened? When? Where? How staffed? How many pupils? What grades of schooling provided? Did this show results in citizenship? What Negro population figures? How many schools were established?

3. Education in the Twentieth Century.

- a. Apply the same queries in section 1-a to both the rural and urban schools of the years prior to 1933. Show the gradual growth and improvement in faculties and standards. Show enlargement of curricula. If possible, note local influences on education, such as effect of church's interest in problems of schooling; parent interest; growth of education in general mass of population. This is a controversial point and it must not be belabored unduly, but in some instances the grade of schooling and the type of school is determined largely by some local preference or prejudice (using the word in its strict sense of "pre-judgment without evidence.")
- b. How did the adoption of county unit system affect this particular county school set-up? Enlarge it? Hamper it? Were standards raised or lowered? Did control shift to politicians more than before? Or to outside educators? Or were teachers permitted more freedom? (Especially worthwhile would be the narrative of any struggle over some educational issue within the county. Such an one was the John T. Scopes trial in Tennessee, where the teaching of evolution was charged as criminal.) Give statistics on growth in school enrollment during years. What are present figures? Compare present facilities and enrollment, etc., with previous ones.

Outline present education set-up in all its parts:

- (1) Graded Schools: Standards, teachers, pay. Enrollment, attendance, truancy, delinquency. Physical equipment. Systems used in instruction. Courses taught. Any recent changes in methods or aim. Have any progressive experiments been made?
- (2) High Schools: Same as above. All details.
- (3) Negro Schools: Same as above. All details.
- (4) New Efforts Toward Consolidation: Busses, etc. Effect on educational standards, quality of teaching. (Please do not parrot state educational department blurbs here. Get the facts from observation, question, and local opinion.)
- (5) Trade Schools: Treat fully as (1) above. Also get any added facts of interest. Do not forget names of persons in movement.
- (6) Institutions of Higher Learning: (Omit if none exist within the county.) Give development and history. Also all facts about present set-up with physical description of plant. Be sure to emphasize the men who were in the movement in all these matters. We want to know what people do, and why and how. You can't put in too many names of persons.